

March 8, 2004

Public Notice for 401 Certification

State Route 101 – Luffenholtz Creek Culvert Repair Project WDID No. 1B04010WNHU

Humboldt County

On February 3, 2004, the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (hereinafter Regional Water Board) received an application from Ms. Deborah Harmon on behalf of California Department of Transportation (hereinafter applicant), requesting Water Quality Certification and/or Waste Discharge Requirements (Dredge/Fill Projects) to repair the culvert at the State Route 101 crossing over Luffenholtz Creek at Post Mile 99.03, north of Westhaven in Humboldt County. The proposed work will cause temporary disturbances to Luffenholtz Creek in the Little River Hydrologic Area No. 108.20.

The purpose of the proposed project is to repair the deteriorated bottom (invert) of the 14-foot diameter concrete arch culvert. The invert has deteriorated and is in need of repair to prevent further deterioration and possible failure of the structure. The applicant is proposing to pave the invert with concrete and install a fish weir inside the culvert.

Anadromous fish are currently unable to access the outlet end of the culvert due to a migration barrier located approximately 0.25 mile downstream at Scenic Road. Future projects at the Highway 101 culvert site may include the addition of a fishway at the outlet to allow fish to enter the culvert. The proposed fish weir inside the culvert is intended to allow fish passage in the future once an outlet fishway has been completed and the downstream migration barrier has been addressed.

Dewatering of Luffenholtz creek will be necessary during project construction. A small dam will be installed approximately 45 feet upstream of the culvert using a combination of sandbags, plastic sheeting, water bladders, clean sand and gravel, or other nonerosive materials. Water behind the dam will be pumped and conveyed through a hose to the outlet end of the culvert. Concrete will be pumped to the culvert through a hose from a truck parked on the shoulder of Highway 101. The total stream area permanently affected by the invert paving and fish weir installation project will be 0.097 acre of jurisdictional Waters of the State, including wetland and river channel.

The proposed project will be conducted between July 1 and October 15, 2004, or during the same period in 2005, 2006, or 2007. Best Management Practices will be implemented to prevent indirect impacts to water quality. Existing trails will be used to route personnel and concrete to the construction site. No heavy equipment will be used in the creek or on the creek bank. No vegetation removal is proposed. All potentially adverse impacts to the stream from this project are anticipated to be temporary.

The applicants have applied for authorization to perform the proposed project under Nationwide Permits Nos. 3 and 23 from the United States Army Corps of Engineers, pursuant to the Clean Water Act, Section 404. The California Department of Transportation, as the lead California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) agency, has determined that this project will have no significant effect on the environment and is categorically exempt from CEQA (Class 1, Section 15301). The applicant has applied for a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement (1601 Permit) from California Department of Fish and Game.

Regional Water Board staff is proposing to regulate this project pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1341) and/or Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act Authority. In addition, staff will consider all comments received during a 21-day comment period that begins on the first date of issuance of this letter. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Regional Water Board staff member Dean Prat by phone at (707) 576-2801, or e-mail pratd@rb1.swrcb.ca.gov within 21 days of the posting of this notice.